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26 March 1962

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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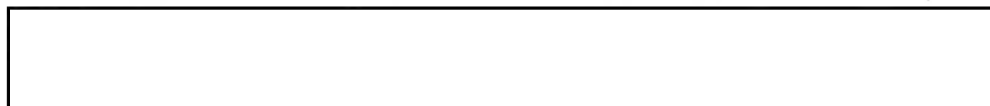
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*Argentina: [President Frondizi's continuance in office remains uncertain. The navy's insistence on his ouster, in the face of his refusal to resign, has increased pressure within the other services for extraconstitutional action. The secretary of the army, however, is backing Lieutenant General Aramburu's efforts to find a constitutional solution to the crisis and in this is said to have the support of the strategic Campo de Mayo garrison near Buenos Aires. Frondizi urgently requested Aramburu's mediation on 23 March.]

[Aramburu, a strong critic of Frondizi, reportedly views his mediation efforts with military and political leaders as designed not to preserve any individual or group but to save the country from chaos. He emphasizes the need for a positive program. In a speech yesterday, Aramburu appealed for a truce in the crisis and announced that he will report to the nation Monday night on the results of his mediation efforts. According to a good source of the American Embassy, Aramburu is advocating that the results of the 18 March elections be respected. This suggestion would be difficult for the military to accept, since they prompted the crisis by steps to annul the Peronistas' electoral victories; it would, however, offer a basis for negotiation with the Peronistas to settle for part of their gains.]

[No positive results have yet been reported from Aramburu's meetings, and Frondizi has been unable to rally important political support to complete the formation of a coalition cabinet acceptable to the military. The forces supporting constitutionality are said to doubt that Senator Jose Maria Guido, president of the Senate and constitutional successor to Frondizi, would be capable of "leading the country away from the brink of chaos."]

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USSR-Berlin: For the first time since 15 March, the Soviets have scheduled flight activity in the corridors as high as 10,000 feet. On 24 March the Soviet controller at the BASC gave notification of three outbound Soviet flights in the southern corridor to take place today between 0600 and 0743 EST at altitudes of 4,000, 6,000, and 10,000 feet. One of the five Western commercial aircraft regularly scheduled to be in the corridor during this period is an Air France Caravelle, normally flown at 9,000 feet and due in Berlin at 0740 EST. On 15 March, shortly after three Soviet transports flew the southern corridor at altitudes ranging from 5,000 to 10,000 feet, the USSR protested that a Western commercial aircraft had "endangered air safety in the corridors."

The two Soviet transport flights were carried out on 24 March generally as scheduled. As usual, no flights were scheduled for Sunday, 25 March.

Moscow has continued minor harassment of Western ground access to Berlin, intermittently pressing demands for advance notice of all Western military traffic on the autobahn. [Redacted] (Back-up, Page 1,

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France-Algeria: The fighting in Algiers has not seriously hurt the Secret Army Organization (OAS) in terms of either morale or materiel, according to the US Consulate General, which feels, however, that OAS sympathizers must have been shaken by the vigor of the French Army's riposte. French officials recognize that the OAS has committed only a small part of its forces and that it is well financed and equipped to fight a long and bitter campaign against the government.

The American Embassy in Paris reports a feeling of "stunned incredulity and rising indignation" in France over

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OAS attacks on French military forces in Algeria. The embassy believes that despite many individual crises of conscience in the army over this situation, "it is inconceivable that the army will not now recognize the need to finish off the OAS."

25X1 [] In Tunis a local PAG representative emphasized on 23 March that the Algerians would control the provisional executive for Algeria, and that they would opt for the minimum transitional period of three months--and press for constituent assembly elections within two weeks after an independence referendum in July. He stated that Algerian refugees, social organizations, and some political organizers would shortly begin leaving Tunisia for Algeria. In Morocco an official PAG spokesman announced on 24 March that the Algerians would continue to respect the cease-fire, but called for the rapid establishment of the provisional executive and for the restoration of order in Algiers and Oran. [] 25X1 25X1

25X1 [] Congo: [] Although both Adoula and Tshombé insisted that a rupture had not occurred, negotiations concerning Congolese []

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[] reunification had reached a critical phase by 24 March. There are unconfirmed reports that talks now have been "suspended." According to Adoula, after six days of negotiations Tshombé continued to insist that any accord reached in Leopoldville was subject to ratification by the Katangan parliament. Adoula is contemplating a radio address concerning the current impasse, and reportedly is prepared to submit his government to a vote of confidence in parliament.

[] Frustration within the central government over its inability to bring Tshombé to heel appears to have stimulated criticism of the US and the UN. In conversation with Ambassador Gullion, Adoula charged on 23 March that both the US and the UN were in effect aiding Tshombé by obstructing Congolese efforts to develop an air force. In a speech to parliament on 24 March, President Kasavubu attacked unnamed foreigners "who claim to know our needs and problems better than ourselves." []
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*Laos: General Phoumi, who met with Prime Minister Sarit and Assistant Secretary Harriman this past weekend, appears unshaken in his determination to resist the formation of any government in which Souvanna Phouma would control the ministries of defense and interior. In talks held at Nong Khai, a Thai border town 15 miles southeast of Vientiane, Harriman reported that Phoumi stubbornly resisted all arguments, claiming Souvanna had failed in his mission to form a government.

Subsequent meetings in Vientiane, at which Harriman conferred again with Phoumi as well as with King Savang, Premier Boun Oum and other Laotian leaders, apparently also failed to achieve any substantive progress. Prior to Harriman's departure for Bangkok on 25 March, a government spokesman announced that there remained "profound" disagreement regarding the assignment of the two controversial portfolios.

Souvanna, claiming that his "patience had limits," has stated that he plans to fly to Paris the first week in April for a visit with his family. He indicated, however, that he would return to Khang Khay at any time "if there were signs of progress."

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Soviet Treatment of Autobahn Convoys

On 22 March a westbound three-vehicle British convoy was held up at the Babelsberg checkpoint because the Soviets had not received written advance notice of its arrival. Despite the lack of prior notification, on 23 March 12 to 15 British vehicles on separate travel orders transited Babelsberg at 15-minute intervals without difficulty. On the following day a 50-vehicle British convoy processed out of Berlin without harassment.

On 23 March, however, the second element of a US convoy was held up for two hours while the Soviets again raised the issue of prior notice for all US military traffic on the autobahn. On 24 March oral advance notice was provided for a nine-vehicle US convoy which cleared Babelsberg without incident on the following day.

The Soviets may be taking advantage of the congestion which results from barriers placed near the East German guard shacks at the checkpoints several months ago to blur the distinction between military and civilian traffic. Because the right lane of the checkpoint area was in use for civilian traffic, the US convoy which was held up on 23 March was parked in the center lane. During discussions about clearance of the vehicles, the Soviet checkpoint commander complained about the position of the convoy and threatened to turn back any vehicles which in the future did not park in the right lane. Congestion at the checkpoints has been used previously by the Soviets as a pretext for holding up movements.

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Congo

[Adoula's reference to requesting a vote of confidence suggests that he wishes to take the initiative in any parliamentary debate on the Katanga impasse. He indicated to Ambassador Gullion that he feared the lack of progress in negotiations with Tshombé could lead to a censure motion.]

[Adoula's opponents in parliament do not appear sufficiently united to bring down the government at this time. The Chamber of Deputies is currently preoccupied with diverse proposals for increasing the number of provinces in the Congo. The embassy reports that in the chamber's 23 March session--"unruly even for the Congo"--most deputies denounced a government-sponsored committee report advocating an increase in the number of provinces from five to twenty. Opposition to the measure reportedly came both from persons opposed to any new provinces and from deputies who desired provincial status for virtually every tribal area.]

[Tshombé's intransigence in his talks with Adoula may stem in part from hitherto unsuccessful efforts by Western diplomats to force Union Minière to place in escrow the bulk of Katanga's mineral revenues. A communication from the mining combine to Tshombé in Leopoldville reportedly urged that Tshombé and Adoula achieve a reconciliation, but alluded only vaguely to a proposal "originating in Leopoldville" that a "certain percentage" of Katangan mining revenues be placed in a special fund.]

[The embassy reports that pressure appears to be mounting in Leopoldville for the trial of Vice Premier Gizenga. The mother and both wives of the erstwhile Stanleyville leader have circulated exaggerated accounts of the conditions under which Gizenga is kept under detention. Such a campaign to embarrass Adoula may find support in bloc and radical African states. The embassy reports, however, that a trial of Gizenga does not appear imminent.]

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